

Message Text

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0171

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN REPS
ON APRIL 8, 1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE APRIL 8 INFORMAL SESSION OF THE VIENNA TALKS, THE ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY THE CANADIAN REP, FRG REP AND US REP, AND THE EAST BY SOVIET REPS KHLESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY, CZECHOSLOVAK REP MEISNER, AND GDR REP OESER. THE SESSION BROUGHT NO NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EASTERN POSITION. THE EAST DID NOT QUESTION GOOD FAITH OF WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AS THEY HAD IN RECENT SESSIONS, BUT AGAIN STATED THAT WESTERN POSITIONS WERE THE MAIN REASONS WHY PROGRESS HAD NOT BEEN MADE THUS FAR. KHLESTOV ONCE AGAIN RAISED THE IDEA OF AN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP, BUT WAS UNABLE TO
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EXPLAIN WHAT THE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCH A

FIRST STEP WOULD BE. KHLESTOV SHOWED SOME INTEREST IN THE PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN THE PHASES, ASKING WHETHER IT WOULD BEGIN TO RUN FROM THE TIME OF SIGNATURE OR FROM RATIFICATION.

2. CANADIAN REP LED OFF. HE SAID THE MAIN REASON THE ALLIES HAD REJECTED RECENT EASTERN SUGGESTIONS WAS THAT THESE SUGGESTIONS STILL CONTAINED THE SAME MAIN ELEMENTS WHICH FORMED THE CONTENT OF THE EASTERN DRAFT AGREEMENT OF NOVEMBER 1973 AND GAVE THE REASONS FOR ALLIED OBJECTIONS TO THESE MAIN ELEMENTS. GDR REP PRAISED MERITS OF RECENT EASTERN PROPOSALS AND SAID THAT THE FAULT FOR LACK OF PROGRESS THUS FAR IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AROSE FROM THE EFFORT OF WESTERN PARTICIPANTS TO CHANGE THE BALANCE OF POWER IN CENTRAL EUROPE TO THE BENEFIT OF NATO THROUGH ADVANCING AN UNSCIENTIFIC AND ARBITARILY CONSTRUCTED REDUCTION PROPOSAL. KHLESTOV MADE CLAIM THAT THE EAST HAD TAKEN OVER ELEMENTS OF THE WESTERN POSITION IN ITS NEW PROPOSALS, WHEREAS THE ALLIES HAD NOT TAKEN OVER ANY ELEMENTS OF THE EASTERN POSITION IN PROPOSALS THEY HAD MADE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THEREFORE, THE EAST HAD DONE MORE TO MOVE NEGOTIATIONS AHEAD THAN WEST AND IT WAS UP TO THE WEST TO MAKE A MOVE.

3. KHLESTOV RAISED THE INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL. HE SAID ITS CONTENT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO THE CONTENT PROPOSED BY EAST, BUT COULD BE A COMPOSITE OF ELEMENTS FROM THE POSITIONS OF BOTH SIDES AND COULD ALSO CONTAIN NEW ELEMENTS WHICH WERE NOT IN THE POSITION OF EITHER SIDE. HOWEVER, WE WAS UNABLE TO IDENTIFY THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP OTHER THAN TO STATE THAT IT WOULD BE A COMPROMISE AND WOULD BE A FIRST AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS. GDR REP ADDED THE POINT THAT AN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP WOULD BE LIMITED AS TO THE AMOUNT OF REDUCTIONS AND IN OTHER WAYS WHICH HE DECLINED TO SPECIFY.

4. FRG REP STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF WESTERN MOVES IN NEGOTIATIONS THUS FAR, PARTICULARLY COMMITMENT THAT DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD NOT INCREASE OVERALL MANPOWER BETWEEN THE PHASES AND THAT ALL REMAINING WESTERN DIRECT

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PARTICIPANTS WOULD PARTICIPATE IN PHASE II REDUCTIONS, PLUS AGREEMENT TO COVER AIR FORCE MANPOWER UNDER A NO-INCREASE COMMITMENT. US REP GAVE REASONS WHY THE EAST SHOULD MOVE BEYOND ITS LIMITED ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA THAT THE US AND USSR SHOULD BE TREATED DIFFERENTLY FROM THE OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SUBSTANTIAL US AND SOVIET REDUCTIONS IN A FIRST PHASE WERE AN EQUITABLE AND REALISTIC WAY OF DEALING WITH THESE DIFFERENCES. CZECH-

OSLOVAK REP MADE CASE THAT EASTERN PARTICIPANTS HAD ADHERED
TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE JUNE 1973 COMMUNIQUE CONCLUDING
THE PREPARATORY TALKS, BUT THE WEST HAD NOT.

5. THE NEXT SESSION WILL BE HELD ON APRIL 15. END SUMMARY.
RESOR

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